



A

TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY.

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A TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY;

OR, A

FEW OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

DISCONTINUANCE

OF

“THE TRACTS FOR THE TIMES,”

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO

THE PAPISTICAL TENDENCY OF SOME PROCEEDINGS RESULTING
FROM THEIR PUBLICATION.

BY THE REV.

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“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.”—1 PET. iv. 11.

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P R E F A C E.

IT may be considered an unwise act, in this case, for me to place my name to a publication, which must inevitably cause the severe censure of those, to whom it especially refers. But I prefer to act the open part, rather than attempt *to stab*, as it were, *in the dark*. I had rather endure any animosity or party feeling, which may be entertained against myself, than run the risk of other men, on my account, being visited by the severe acumen of criticism. Having also been accused through the means of the public press, of holding the very doctrines and principles which I have in the following pages repudiated (simply because I have advocated Episcopacy and preached up its divine authority, preferring the old and well tried

paths of Orthodoxy, to those new ones, which tradition has devised, and so suddenly induced the unstable to follow), I am glad of this opportunity to deny, through the same means, so unfounded and unwarranted a charge.

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&c.

MOST heartily do I congratulate the public, that, by the advice of the Bishop of Oxford, *the Tracts for the Times* are to be discontinued! But why, it may be asked, should I, an humble individual, come forth in the hour of victory to offer my congratulations? My answer is simply, because I was among the first, if not the very first, who ventured *to use means* to show, that the inevitable tendency of those *Tracts* was papistical.

Were I convinced that the evil resulting from the publication of the *Tracts* would *die* with the series, I would not venture to write one syllable respecting them; but I believe, upon authority, that the *authors of the Tracts* intend to continue their writings, and to exercise their energies so long as they can find converts or readers. With this assurance and conviction, I venture more boldly

upon the few observations, which I feel myself bound to make respecting them.

When *the Tracts* first appeared, the Bishop of Oxford, it was said, gave countenance to their production: this fact at once encouraged the work, and it proceeded with gradual success. An apology however, may be urged by the Bishop, that the object of *the Tracts* was to uphold Episcopacy. My answer to this is, that had the authors of *the Tracts* confined themselves to that point, no mischief, or agitation, or party would have arisen in the Church. It was doubtless very good generalship on the part of these gentlemen to endeavour, upon the first throw off, to secure the good opinion of the Bishops, by preserving the authority of their order, that they might retire under their protection, whenever the critic's eye, or the world's censure, should attempt to beat them off from their purpose. For a time their good tact was remarkably visible, and all went on satisfactorily, and crowds of our orthodox divines adopted their sentiments, and laboured to add proselytes to their cause; until, growing bold in the undertaking, they outstepped the pale of the English Church, and approached that of Rome. It was then, that many of the Prelates, like faithful watchmen, ascertained the dangerous effects and the *ulterior object* of their productions, and at once denounced them, by cautioning their clergy against

their pernicious tendency, and at last the Bishop of Oxford, whether or not in consequence of the expressed sense of the hebdomadal board, I will not determine, recommended a discontinuance of these agitating productions. Mr. Newman had no alternative but to obey, for his publications would instantly have borne witness against him, had he refused to desist. Yet we might almost be inclined to consider his Lordship's recommendation, and Mr. Newman's assent quite nugatory, if the same principles and the same doctrines are to be propounded in different forms; more especially as a second edition of Tract No. 90 is announced—announced too *after* the Bishop of Oxford considered it objectionable, and recommended the discontinuance of the series. It is not for me to call upon his Lordship, but I may be allowed to express a hope, that what he has begun, he will manfully and conscientiously terminate; that he will not confine his care to *the Tracts* alone, but direct it to any work or works, which may succeed them, and become the instrument of remedying, as far as possible, the evils, which have arisen in his diocese, and thence have spread over the kingdom, and of healing the dangerous divisions which they have made in the Church. Every true friend of the Establishment must acknowledge, that had the Bishop of Oxford exerted his authority and watchfulness, or

even made his late recommendation when the public press first directed his attention to the series, much of the agitation would have been averted; but it is not too late, even *at this hour*, to take active measures against the growing evil.

In these pages I do not profess to enter into a critical examination of the matter which the authors of *the Tracts* have published, in illustration of the Primitive Church; nor do I, upon this occasion, submit the appeal to what has been called *primitive tradition* to its proper ordeal. Let those who desire such things seek them elsewhere.

My object is to congratulate the public upon the discontinuance of *the Tracts*; more happy should I be to congratulate them, that the writers had entirely ceased from labours of this description, and that they were prepared openly to recant the dangerous opinions, which they have promulgated. If they would so far set aside theory as to reflect, that they have disciples, and many of them very young and very little exercised in theological criticism, who grasp at all that they advance, and, whether capable or incapable of examination for themselves, propose to others the like tenets, though perhaps garbled and mutilated,—I feel confident, from the character of these *authors*, that they would instantly *revise* their *Tracts*, and openly avow that which they could not substantiate by Scripture. By this test much of the

straw and stubble would be removed, and much good might result from the labour. I speak thus because, after due examination, I am convinced, that many parts of the *Tracts* cannot bear the test of Scripture. There can be no mistake, in this assertion, that *whatever in theology cannot be substantiated by the Bible, should be instantly rejected as worthless.*

But I must at once touch upon the circumstances connected with the *Tracts for the Times*.

The following are some of the objectionable tenets which have been considered as the most prominent of those held by the *authors*, and especially by their disciples.

1. That they consider the authority of the Church superior to that of the Sovereign, or the State, and consequently, the legislature has no right to interfere in ecclesiastical matters.

2. That they observe, with extraordinary reverence, many *external* and *obsolete* forms.

3. That they attach greater importance to fasts than to the Sabbath.

4. That they deny the right of the common people to read the Scriptures, unless they first read the Common Prayer-book, and thus appear to set the Prayer-book above the Bible.

5. That they set up tradition as a sure and infallible guide in all matters of religion, and view the inspired volume as only to be interpreted by it.

6. That they regard the Virgin Mary, in one sense, divine, and consequently worthy of worship¹.

7. That they maintain that departed saints are to be prayed to, and that prayers for the dead should be offered.

8. That they regard all other Christians who think differently to themselves with an uncharitable eye, and rank the Church of Rome above them.

9. That they have erroneous opinions respecting the Sacrament of Baptism.

10. That they consider it objectionable to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on Good Friday².

¹ One of the most strenuous of the party affirms that the blessed Virgin Mary *need have made no offering, as requiring no purification*, calling her the *Mother of God*.

It is hardly to be believed that the following hymn came from the pen of a Clergyman of the Church of England.

“Ave Maria! Mother bless'd!
To whom, caressing and caress'd,
Clings the eternal Child;
Favour'd beyond archangel's dream,
When first on thee, with tend'rest gleam,
Thy new-born Saviour smiled.

Ave Maria! Thou, whose name
All but adoring Love may claim,
Yet may we reach *thy shrine*;
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows
To crown all lowly lofty brows
With love and joy like thine.”

² That sound theologian, Bishop Porteus, speaking of the religious observances of Good Friday, thus says:—“This day affords

11. That they think it necessary to mix water with the sacramental wine.

12. That they hold the ancient liturgies in greater reverence than our Communion Service, and have modified for use parts of the Roman Breviary.

13. That they prefer reading the prayers kneeling before the altar, consequently turning their backs to the congregation, to reading them from the desk.

14. That they inculcate reserve in religious communications, and would forbid discussions on the doctrine of the atonement.

15. That they, in fact, reduce the Christian religion to a routine of ordinances and mortifications contrary to its spirit, and make the Scriptures a book whose seal can only be opened by tradition.

From these statements, I will at once proceed to the circumstances which gave rise to the indefatigable exertion of the *Authors of the Tracts*.

At the time when agitation without and dissension within were threatening the subversion of our Zion, a host of men arose, doubtless with the very best intentions, to quell the animosity that indicated certainly, from the very strength and power of its members, the most alarming consequences. These men were called *Tractarians, Puseyites, Church of England*

a good opportunity of entreating pardon through the merits of our Redeemer, and of pleading those merits before God in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which being intended to commemorate the sufferings of Christ, can never be more properly received than on the very day when those sufferings are supposed to have happened."

men, quoad the emoluments, but not the principles, and some ventured to designate them as *Papists in disguise*³, heaping on them other opprobrious names, on account of their zeal and extraordinary energies and self-denials.

Three reasons were also given for the cause of the great excitement that the *Authors of the Tracts* had created in the theological world. By some, it was said, that their object was to create a *movement*, and thus to secure themselves the certainty of preferment; by others, that their object was simply to oppose the evangelical party⁴; and by others again, that their object was gradually to introduce Romanism within the pale of the Church of England. For some of these charges, Mr. Froude's *Remains*, certain passages in *the Tracts* themselves, and innovations on the customary mode of performing public worship, gave a strong plea; and it must equally be admitted, that the motive of the undertaking was not in unison with the manner in which it was conducted. Some

³ Mr. Froude, in his *Remains*, avows his hatred to the Reformation and the Reformers, and declares, that "the Reformation was a limb badly set; it must be broken again, in order to be righted;" and talks about our trumpery principles as to Scripture being the sole rule in fundamentals.

⁴ It does not follow, because men do not approve of the tenets and principles of the Authors of the Tracts, that consequently they belong to other parties, which unfortunately exist within the Establishment.

of the charges, however, in my opinion, are nothing less than a libel upon the characters and intentions of some of the Authors ; and many of their opinions, and the object of many of their labours, may be referred to a somewhat undue veneration to the dicta of the Fathers. I am confident that I am correct in vindicating the integrity of their intentions (nevertheless a wide door for schism is opened), and in affirming, that there has been more danger in the disciples than in the masters ; in which idea I have been confirmed, by witnessing in some of our Churches, especially under the ministration of the younger clergy, *external approaches* to Romanism, which were contrary to the canons, and in every respect reprehensible. This allegation also has received still greater confirmation from the fact, that several of them have been called to account, and most justly so, by their superiors, as many of the Bishops can attest.

The truth has been, that the discussions and researches in *the Tracts* have become the groundwork of a far more extensive *practice* than the writers seem to have intended ; and that many of those, who addicted themselves to this new school in the Church, wanting the learning and critical acumen of its masters have branched out into extravagances and theories, which were little short of Popery. Their faults and vagaries became imputed to *the Tract-writers*. Viewing thus the question in its just light, we are

on the one hand bound to fix the blame where it is really due, and on the other to oppose the tendency of the practices, which some have sought to introduce. For what value, I ask, are we to put upon the orthodoxy of the Church of England, if, when we enter the house of God, we find it disgraced by symbols, and crosses, and pictures, and lighted candles, and various devices, the meaning of which is only known to the officiating clergyman? Do not the candles and the other outward forms of godliness speak in an unknown tongue to the people, who should be taught in such legible characters, that he that runneth might read? Are not the thoughts instantly turned upon the Roman Catholic Churches, in which every outward form and attraction constitute so much of the service to God? And what means the alteration of the shape of the surplice, emblematic of purity, but an approach to those corruptions which were shaken off so strenuously and valiantly by the martyrs of old? What means the wearing of the cross at the altar, if it be not to invite the poor to fall down and worship the mere wood? As a Protestant (and I am not ashamed of the name, but I glory in it), I must *protest* as long as my hand can write, and my tongue can speak, against such alarming innovations.

It has been considered, that Mr. Newman has acted a most manly part in announcing the discon-

tinuance of the series of Tracts. How, I ask, could *he* do otherwise, than bow before the advice of his Diocesan? It would have been to have questioned the sincerity of his work, had he acted otherwise. But, I ask, will he discontinue the other publications under his superintendence, which speak the same tenets and principles as the Tracts do themselves, and recommend his disciples to do the same? Will he and his party declare, as openly as they have done in the one case, that they will not again offend the orthodoxy of the Church, by striking out a new plan for circulating their truly objectionable practices? Could we ensure this, we might then further congratulate ourselves, that the violence within the Establishment had, in a measure, ceased. However painful it is, we must look to the cause, when we see the effect; therefore, with the greatest possible respect for these gentlemen, and with the greatest admiration of their profound learning, I am compelled to assert, that all the departure from the principles of the Reformation, which with innovating strides has entered the Church, and disturbed its peace, is imputable to their writings. They must have already seen how their theory of the primitive doctrines of the Church has worked, and have seen sufficient to prove, that it has given rise to a schism. It is not my present purpose to discuss whether they are correct in their assertions,—and less so,

because the assertions have been elsewhere disproved, —but to urge on them the important consideration, that they are laying waste the Lord's Vineyard, and, by destroying the unanimity of its guardians, exposing it to the spoiling hand of its enemies. A discontinuance of their proceedings may be like plucking out the right eye or cutting off the right arm; but it is a duty that they owe to that Church, which they have professed to defend. Yes, as an humble individual, but not on that account less jealous of the orthodoxy of the Establishment, I ask them to resign the leadership of that, which cannot, to use the mildest expression, be called otherwise than a party in the Church⁶. It might be supposed, that the very fact of their discontinuing their *Tracts*, in a measure proves that they have already observed their evil tendency; and that having also observed a tottering in their principles, they, on the first hint, abandoned their undertaking. But the republication of the 90th Tract, and the avowed intention of exercising their labours, in other ways, take from us even this charitable hope.

That there is still danger in the proceedings of the Authors, may be contemplated from the fact of their being men of wealth, consequently no pecuniary consideration can operate with them—from the enor-

⁶ See a Speech partly delivered by the Rev. Dr. Hook, at the Leeds District Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

mous sale of their publications, thus encouraging their future exertions—and from the many, who have joined in their train, and paid almost homage and adoration to their writings, thus meeting with the greatest of all encouragements, which few men in their great desire of ambition can resist. But after all, if their writings will not bear the test of Scripture, upon what authority, as professed members of the Church, do they proceed, especially as all things necessary for our salvation are therein contained? What will avail the discontinuance of one *series*, if the evil be continued in others? The question has ceased to be, whether the evil has or has not gone forth? but how, having gone forth, it can be stayed? The root of the evil has been the undue exaltation of tradition, which will often be found in the pages of the various Fathers, so vague and so contradictory, and withal so plentiful, as to give a colouring for almost any theory; and it must be remembered, that by the help of traditions the Papists find a sanction for their idolatries and other extravagant observances. Traditions have ever been the means, by which the fallacies of man have been set up against the standard of God. The Jews used them in their endeavours to render the word of God of none effect by them; heretics have distorted the Scriptures by them, and the Roman Catholics, by their aid, have instituted practices and observances

in palpable opposition to the words of inspiration. And who can tell to what purpose they may yet be applied? or limit their consequences, if once deemed necessary to salvation? We must never attempt to throw out of sight, that the Fathers themselves were *fallible*, and therefore just as likely to err as any man of this generation. Why, then, should their writings be regarded with such *extraordinary* veneration? And why should tradition, which before has conducted the Church to Popery, be so highly esteemed at a time when Popery is so much to be dreaded?

That consequences resulting from the publication of the *Tracts for the Times* have grievously been felt in the religious community, cannot fairly be denied; and the greatest argument in proof of the evil, is the fact of the encouragement and approbation, which the authors have received from the Roman Catholics themselves. These people have considered that the *authors of the Tracts* are not only gradually coming over to the Church of Rome, but are actually doing the work of the Roman Catholic priests⁶. It is believed, and I hope that there is some authority for the fact, that Dr. Pusey and Mr. Newman consider themselves, that the enthusiasm of their disciples has already gone too far effectually to advance

⁶ See Dr. Wiseman's publications.

their cause. But who, I candidly ask, is answerable for their conduct? If the key-stone of the building be misplaced, and the structure advances out of all the rules of architecture, who is accountable? If the stream be wrongly conducted, is not the vehicle, not the water that follows its directed course, in fault?

It is indeed lamentable to observe in the theological world, the departure of men from the orthodoxy of the Church. It is a fearful sight to witness the actions of men, which formerly tended to secure the admiration of the world, and the glory of a benign Deity, rushing from the straight path of duty, and endeavouring, by some mighty effort, to exceed the level of distinction. But such is the truth. Some popular preachers of the Metropolis are not contented with their share of renown, but must attempt, by an unusual course of conduct, and by the revivification of obsolete customs and ceremonies, not proved to have belonged to the Apostolic times, to raise themselves still higher in the scale of public applause; and the old orthodox parish priest, moved on by ambition and a name, has become restless in his sphere of duty, and ventures to point out to men a new path to the invisible abode of Jehovah! Surely the clerical life affords sufficient scope for these men to distinguish themselves, and to heap up their dear popularity, without agitating the minds or tearing the consciences of their respective hearers.

There is a vast field open to the ambitious man, if he follow the good old ways, without disorganising or distorting the truth, or endeavouring to raise *human tradition* up to the standard of *inspired Scripture*.

It is an alarming fact, that the tenets and principles contained in the *Tracts* have got into our Pulpits, and already made advances in the Senate. But it must be allowed, that Christianity has gained a signal victory, in the fact that this *open* violence against the Church is to be discontinued.

It is a fearful event, that men holding high situations in the Church, resident in an University devoted to the instruction of youth, should lay themselves open to the charge of having caused divisions in that Church ; and that they should have given examples and precedents to others, who might at any future time harass our Zion with their innovations : nor is it a little unworthy to cavil respecting the hebdomadal board, which noticed the 90th *Tract*, as if it were distinct from the judgment of the university. But the boldness is unparalleled, which nerves them, after the episcopal censure, to propagate in another form the principles which have already created so much dissatisfaction in the breasts of the wisest and most orthodox of men. We might ask, if it be not Jesuitical to promise the discontinuance of *the Tracts*, if the doctrines of *the Tracts* are still to be advocated in another way ? There are in the theological world,

men equally distinguished, equally zealous, and equally learned as the authors of the *Tracts for the Times* ; and I do hope that these will come forward at this critical juncture, and give another decided blow upon that, which has already fallen, and thus extinguish all divisions, which, alas ! have too long threatened a continued agitation in the Church ; and that, ere long, by this necessary counteraction, and the help of the Almighty, without whom nothing can prevail or flourish, peace and harmony and good will towards men will be the predominant qualifications of every man who loves his GOD, his COUNTRY, and his QUEEN.

THE END.



